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Robbins, Barney R.

In memoriam...

[New York]

[1917]

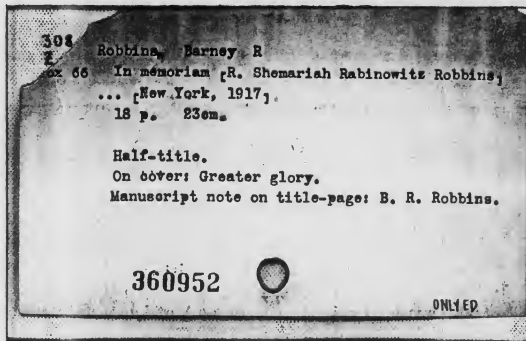
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B. C. Robbins

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Box 66

Greater Glory

From the Family:
In token of friendship
on the occasion of the
first anniversary of the
death of their father.

New York
November
1917

In Memoriam



B. R. Roskies

יקר בעיניי המותה לחסדתי
תהלים קכ"ז

Precious in the sight of the Lord
is the death of His saints.

Psalms 116

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תהאם קטיו

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Psalms 116

...כבוד ויהלל המהלל השכל וידע אתי
 כי אני " עשה חסד משפט יצדקה בארץ כי
 באלה הפצתי נאם " .
 ירמיה טז

... Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he
 understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the
 Lord who exercise loving kindness, judgment
 and righteousness, in the earth: for in these
 things I delight, saith the Lord.

Jeremiah IX

25 Feb. 1920 - C.R.W.

Memoir

R. Shemiah Rabinowitz Robbins, the son of R. Isaac
 Judah Loeb and Ethel, was born in Wilna in 1847.
 He was descended from many generations of Rabbis and
 scholars, his father having held for a number of years the
 honored position of Rosh Yeshiba in the Gaon of Wilna
 Synagogue.

When R. Shemiah was four years of age his father
 died, leaving him to the care of his mother, who though
 engaged in various business enterprises had nevertheless
 chosen for her son a career along lines of scholarly
 endeavor for which he had shown early inclination and
 marked ability.

His marriage in 1866 to Frume Esther, the accom-
 plished daughter of Aaron Salinger, a merchant prince
 and philanthropist of Wilkowsky, Poland, was regarded
 as a social event by reason of uniting two families of
 distinguished scholarship and wealth. Several years after
 his marriage he established himself as a publisher in
 Eydtkuhen, a border town of Germany, devoting his
 energies to the publication of selected classics in medieval
 Hebrew poetry.

While in Wilkowsky, where he took up his residence
 in the late 70's, he made a special study of Liturgical
 Lore and traditional religious melodies. His abundant
 knowledge of the Ritual, coupled with a voice of peculiar
 sweetness and resonance, soon brought him into prom-
 inence as a master *Baal Tefillah*, a distinction which he
 valued beyond every other possession during the whole
 of his life.

In 1892, when conditions in Russia became such as to jeopardize the education of his children, he sailed with his family for the United States, establishing his residence in the City of New York.

On the death of his wife, in 1906, he retired from all business activities and devoted his time to religious communal life and the perpetuation of the Torah in Israel. The House of God became his central thought, and the strengthening of orthodox teachings his ideal and eternal hope.

In his latter years he revised and published *Darkei Teshuva*, a commentary on the Bible, left in manuscript by his father, by means of which he hoped to propagate the word of God and the wisdom of the Prophets.

His death occurred on Sabbath eve, November 17th, 1916, after a short illness. The funeral, which took place on Sunday the 19th, was the occasion of a great gathering of admiring friends who came from far and near to pay the tribute of their last respects and to follow him on his last journey. He was laid at rest beside his devoted wife in a plot reserved for him in Washington Cemetery.

One daughter, Mrs. Rose Haskell, and four sons, Aaron, Louis, Barney R. and John Jacob, survive him.



R. SHEMARIAH R. ROBBINS
BORN IN WILNA IN 1847
DIED (HESHIVAN 22, 5677) NOVEMBER 17, 1916

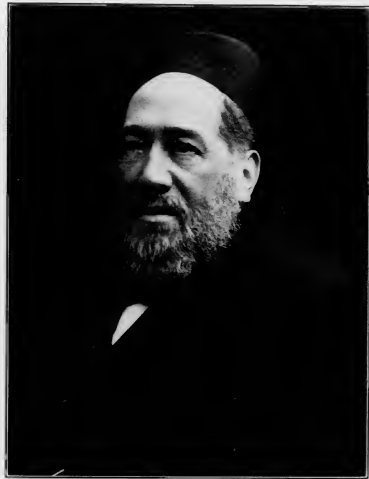
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FRUME ESTHER ROBBINS
née SALINGER
BORN IN WILKOWISIKY IN 1848
DIED (AB 13, 5666) AUGUST 4, 1906



PRUE ESTHER ROBBINS
née SALINGER
BORN IN WILKOWISKY IN 1848
DIED (Aged 56) AUGUST 4, 1906

Greater Glory

Affectionately
Dedicated

כי מקדישך
בקדשתך קדשת



ESIDE God in the seventh heaven stands
Sandalfon, the Angel of Glory, gathering
the prayers of men as they ascend from
below and weaving them into gleaming
crowns for his Creator. And the Ophanim and
Holy Chayoth upraising themselves towards the Seraphim
utter praise and say: *Blessed be the glory of the Lord
from His place.*

And now the Angel of Death is summoned and com-
missioned to descend to the terrestrial abode of a man, a
faithful servant of God to relieve his soul from its earthly
bondage. The Messenger of Death went thereupon away
from the presence of the Lord.

* * * *

It is Friday in the late afternoon at the decline of a
beautiful day in the far advanced Fall. The sacred
Sabbath hour is approaching and as the November sun is
rapidly sinking below the golden horizon, the conservative
Carnegie Hill section of the great metropolis is beginning

to take on a peculiar character. While within the confines of this exclusive colony the Jewish residents are but few, their influence is nevertheless strongly manifest. The sanctification of the everlasting covenant seems to fill the atmosphere as it does the Jewish heart with loving obedience to the word of God—that the Lord and His People are one.

Here, in a modest dwelling, the Sabbath candles are burning brightly, lighting up the tranquil countenance of the pious R. Shemariah as he softly chants: *Come my friend to meet the bride, let us welcome the presence of the Sabbath.* The tide of his life has been slowly ebbing for the last few weeks, and while he feels his hour fleeting he continues intently the holy service. He strives to utter the hymn: *Peace be unto you ye ministering angels,* and endeavors to say *Kiddush: And it was evening and it was morning the sixth day.*

The prepared Sabbath meal is sparingly partaken of and he is now repeating in his heart *A Song of Ascents*, the familiar chapter of the Psalms: *When the Lord brought back those that returned to Zion; proceeding with the Grace and lastly uttering as in inspired meditation: May the All-merciful let us inherit the day which shall be wholly a Sabbath and rest in the life everlasting.*

The children, his great source of consolation and comfort, have now come in to receive from him the

Sabbath blessing. His expressive eyes are filled with silent tears, and as he gazes fondly upon them, the spirit of his beloved wife, their devoted mother, appears in his vision as though to complete the family circle. With a faint motion of the hand he bids farewell to the cherished ones gathered around his bedside, beseeching the Eternal to guide them in the path of righteousness.

The Sabbath candles are now burning low, and as the dying flames flicker and wane he perceives in the shadowy outlines the awaiting Angel. He offers a fervent prayer, —entreating his Maker to lighten his darkness, and with the *Shema* upon his lips his head peacefully sinks into the arms of his daughter as he surrenders his soul to the Messenger of God.

Of a verity, the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord!

* * * *

R. Shemariah in dedicating his life to the study of the Law and the worship of God will be best remembered as the master *Baal Tefillah*, and until the end of my days ever vividly fixed in my recollection will stand out that serene picture of this devout man before the open Holy Ark, pouring out his very soul in supplication to the Lord. My ears will forever be attuned to his soft and resonant voice reading for the congregation the concluding services on the Day of Atonement. With piety and devotion indescribable he is pleading to the Almighty:

... Thou who knowest that our latter end is the worm, hast therefore multiplied the means of our forgiveness, for, what are we? What our righteousness? O Lord our God and the God of our fathers. Are not all the mighty men as naught before Thee? ... Who shall say to Thee what doest Thou? And if he be righteous, what can he give Thee? ... O do Thou in Thy abounding compassion have mercy upon us, and we may return unto Thee to do the statutes of Thy will with a perfect heart.

His great gift of expression and depth of devotion inspired in others the eternal glory of the Lord. His engaging personality, the taste and culture manifest in his profound knowledge and appreciation of the beautiful, brought to bear an influence at every point. He was a man whose ideality, loyalty and simplicity held him aloof from a practical and material world. His faith, his self-abnegation and benevolence appeared almost in the light of a weakness to those not rightly understanding the inner workings of this generous heart and mind. A life devoted to the glorification of God and a soul thrilled with universal love for humanity.

Who of the assembled can ever forget him leading the invocation on Yom Kippur, in the words of Daniel, the beloved:

*Incline O my God Thine ear and hear; open
Thine eyes and behold our desolation, and the*

*City whereupon Thy name is called: for not
on our acts of righteousness do we present
humbly our supplications before Thee, but on
Thy great mercies.*

His very soul was in the Holy Ark and his mind absorbed in the atmosphere of the word of the Lord, as he fervently prayed to Him on high: *Cast us not away from Thy presence and take not Thy holy spirit from us.*

* * * *

In the Heavens above, Sandalfon, the Angel of Prayer is awaiting to receive the kindly spirit of the master Reader. Sandalfon has for many years listened attentively to the uplifted sweet voice of the warm-hearted and whole-hearted R. Shemariah, who has always with pure speech and in harmonious melody fostered beauty in his prayers and delivered them from the very depths of his soul.

A great trumpet is sounded; the heavenly choir assembles; the Seraphim and the Ophanim and the Holy Chayoth in unison raise their voices extolling in praise the Lord of Hosts. A still small voice is heard while the music sweetly pours in solemn cadenced sounds:

*Open the gates—
The Gates of the Temple,
Swift to Thy son,
Who Thy truths has displayed.*

*Open the gates—
The Gates that are hidden
Swift unto him,
Who Thy laws has obeyed.*

The gleaming Sabbath fires leap into sudden splendor; the hovering Angels spread their golden wings, and as Sandalfon serenely opens wide the majestic gates of the coveted Temple, amidst holy melody, rejoicing and exultation, the lovable soul of the pious R. Shemariah ascends to infinite Glory.

* * * *

When I look from my window at night into the starry firmament, I fancy that I can see through the blue ether his noble figure, his affectionate features, full of tenderness, his right hand uplifted in the fervor and passion of prayer: *Shaare Sholom, Shaare Simha, Shaare Shemuos Tovos!*

Verily, the soul of R. Shemariah was an enchanted Prayer.

Far off thou art but ever nigh;
Thy voice is on the rolling air.
I hear thee still and I rejoice
I shall not lose thee though I die.

November, 1916.

M o t h e r

Affectionately
Dedicated

Stars with golden feet are wand'ring
Yonder, and they gently weep
That they cannot thee awaken
Who in night's arms is asleep.

Though it is ten years since you passed into that soft long sleep, it seems but a moment when you bestowed on us the happiness of your tender kiss, and the progressing years will but serve to strengthen the joyful remembrance of your sweet and beautiful soul.

The loss is measureless, your place, dear mother, cannot be filled!

What a world of events have come about during these passing years, and yet, dear mother, in the midst of our greatest joys you were always strangely missing, and in our deepest grief we always looked for the comfort of your tender sympathy.

Your beautiful life was an inspiration,—a glorious sacrifice on the altar of devotion! The heavier the burden that was yours, the greater the difficulty and self denial, the happier were you in the single thought that the benefit was for us, your dear children.

Yet were we still blessed in having our dear father in the years after you had left us. He filled our hearts with his own divine love, and in our lonesome moments thrilled us with those fond memories of you, dear mother, which so helped us to bear with fortitude and courage that great loss we had sustained when you left us for the Heavenly spheres. But now that father, too, has gone to that beau-

tiful veiled bright World, is there another kindlier heart or sweeter that will beat for us, another lovelier eye or brighter that will watch over us?

Ere we had the understanding to show that love and gratitude for all you had so willingly borne; for your endless sacrifice, ceaseless care, boundless devotion and bright affection, you were suddenly taken away and we were left hopelessly indebted for that which can never be ours to repay.

Who can know the value of true parent love till the blessing of parenthood is revealed to us? Its mystery and significance was then still unfolded. But with the passing of the years our vision will penetrate into that dim distance and behold the picture on the canvas of our lives when our own children will scarcely know of this great love in its fullest manifestation till we ourselves are gone, and in that alone, shall we have required our everlasting debt.

At dead of night I seem to see
Thy fair, pale features constantly
Upturned in silent prayer for me,
O'er moveless clasped hands, Mother dear!
I call thee, thou dost not reply:
The stars gleam coldly on thine eye,
As like a dream thou flitest by,
And leav'st me weeping, Mother dear!

November, 1916.

One by one
They are gone,
And their silent graves are seen,
Shining fresh with mosses green,
Where the rising sunbeams slope
O'er the dewy land of Hope.

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